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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 75/NO. 19 MAY 16, 2011

INSIDE

Cuban TV documentary exposes U.S. counterrevolutionary campaign

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Solidarity marks workers' response to tornadoes

Militant photos by Rachele Fruit, top; George Williams, inset

Top: Volunteers at Pratt City disaster relief station at Wylam Elementary School. Brenda Madison is third from right; Sharon Barkley is fifth from right. Inset: David Harrison, University of Alabama junior, volunteers in Tuscaloosa. He brought axes, hammers, and saws for relief effort.

BY RACHELE FRUIT AND GEORGE WILLIAMS

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama—Two contrasting responses are evident in the wake of powerful tornadoes that ripped across seven southern states. On one hand is that of the government and its cold, bureaucratic institutions, the insurance companies with their red tape, and the bosses looking out for number one. On the other hand are working people who, while bearing the brunt of the crisis, are stepping in to fill the breach, rescuing people and helping each other through the crisis.

The April 27 storms killed some 330 people and caused massive destruction. The hardest hit state was Alabama, where more than 230 have died and more than 2,300 are reported injured.

Entire neighborhoods were devastated from Tuscaloosa to Birming-

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Hit by capitalist crisis, workers are receptive to the 'Militant'

At demonstrations across the United States on May 1, hundreds bought subscriptions to the *Militant* newspaper. In coming weeks socialist workers will be following through on this interest in the perspectives on U.S. and world politics presented in the *Militant* by concentrating on door-to-door sales in communities where workers live.

Battered by the world economic crisis that has deepened over the past three years, millions of workers are reacting against the havoc wreaked on our lives and livelihoods by the capitalist system—unemployment, rising food and gasoline prices, onerous debt and foreclosures, cuts in health benefits and pensions, union busting, and much more. Growing numbers of workers are becoming more responsive politically to the radical, working-class outlook advanced in the pages of the *Militant* to address this crisis and the expanding U.S. wars that accompany it.

The *Militant* is in the second week of a six-week international subscription campaign to win more than 2,000

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A letter to our readers

Militant/Rachele Fruit

***Militant* supporter George Williams shows paper to Victoria Robinson at relief station in Pratt City, Alabama, April 30.**

New U.S. 'defense' team reflects CIA-military ties

White House 'justice' and workers rights

Three events over five days—each presented by top U.S. government officials as having to do with "foreign" military and intelligence operations—actually register and reinforce the erosion of the political rights of workers in the United States.

EDITORIAL

The first is the assassination of an unarmed Osama bin Laden, shot in the head May 2 in a compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan, by U.S. Navy Seals acting as judge, jury, and executioner.

Fewer than 48 hours earlier, NATO forces in the skies over Tripoli bombed the compound of Libyan head of state Moammar Gadhafi, killing his son and three grandchildren.

And on April 28 President Barack Obama announced a reorganization of the top leadership of the Defense Department and CIA.

Initial attempts by Obama's aides to prettify the Abbottabad operation unraveled quickly. On May 2 White House "counterterrorism" adviser John Brennan told reporters bin Laden had been armed and "engaged in a firefight" when he was shot, that he used his wife as a shield, and that she had been killed. The next day White House

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BY STEVE CLARK AND BRIAN WILLIAMS

President Barack Obama announced a shift in top military and spying posts in late April. Gen. David Petraeus, head of U.S. operations in Afghanistan, is being appointed director of the CIA. Leon Panetta, who currently holds that position, will take over as defense secretary, with Robert Gates leaving that post in July. With Senate confirmation virtually assured, Petraeus will take charge of the CIA in September.

With regard to both Washington's nearly decade-long war in Afghanistan and its "war against terrorism," an April 27 *Atlantic* magazine column noted, Petraeus and Panetta will act with "an ever-closer joint military and intelligence force that is increasingly secretive and assertive. . . . This week's staff change announcement suggests that [the lines between U.S. military and intelligence operations] will only become more difficult to distinguish."

During the current Democratic administration, the CIA has been escalating drone strikes in Pakistan and parts of Afghanistan. The agency deploys its own special forces and maintains secret bases there. Since Obama took office there have been 194 CIA drone strikes in Pakistan, killing about 1,900 people, including many civilians as well as Taliban militants.

Under the direction of Donald Rumsfeld, George W. Bush's defense secretary through 2006, the Pentagon expanded its own spying operations,

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Workers, youth join May Day demonstrations across the U.S.

BY TAMAR ROSENFELD AND REBECCA WILLIAMSON

HARTFORD, Connecticut—The Connecticut Laborers' District Council sponsored an "Enough Is Enough" rally for workers rights at Bushnell Park here May 1. Some 2,000 people, a large majority unionists, attended.

The action was part of dozens of May Day demonstrations across the country, most of which featured demands for immigrant rights. (See reports on some of these on page 6.)

Hundreds of Laborers and Teamsters members were noticeable in their union T-shirts. Many rally participants said they were inspired by the workers' mobilizations in Wisconsin, triggered by legislation outlawing collective bargaining by public workers on anything beyond wages.

Connecticut's state government is in negotiations with unions representing some 45,000 state employees. Democratic governor Dannel Malloy is seeking $2 billion over two years in concessions from state workers.

Although the capitol was the backdrop for the rally, speakers did not talk about the union-busting attack on public workers. Instead, they focused on encouraging participants to vote for Democratic Party candidates in

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‘Bosses’ gift card is no gift, workers pay for it every day’

BY SETH GALINSKY

Over the last few months, communist workers have sent in a half dozen “blood money” contributions for the Socialist Workers Party’s Capital Fund. The fund helps finance long-range plans of the party.

Blood money is a good description of the one-off payments employers hand out as bribes to try to fool workers into believing the boss is their friend or at least their benefactor. Management hopes these payments will keep workers quiet in the face of speedup, benefit cuts, and its daily trampling on workers’ dignity. Refusing to be drawn in, communist workers take the money and put it to good use by contributing it to the Capital Fund.

The Grossmont Union High School District in San Diego gave a $170 check to school employees earlier in the year. The district “reduced its costs of health care for workers by increasing copays and payments and then claims to ‘gift’ the $170,” wrote Gary Willhite, who works for the district. He sent the check to the fund. “The blood money from the bosses is a bribe to suppress the fight back that is necessary to win,” he added.

The bosses are “attempting to tie workers to the company as if we have a ‘human’ relationship,” wrote Natalie Morrison, when sending in the $30 from a gift card she was handed by bosses where she works in Twin Cities in Minnesota. “We are working forced overtime and are bribed through ‘safety programs’ that encourage us to not report injuries, while being pushed to meet higher production levels.”

Mike Galati sent in $100 from Virginia, “the total of two bribes the bosses have given out to rail workers at my job over the last few months,” he said.

“The company where I work invented a shaggy-dog story to explain why we deserve a bonus,” noted Tom Fiske in the Twin Cities. “The real reason they gave is to defuse our anger at not getting a new contract and receiving an insulting and paltry $10 holiday bonus.” Fiske sent $140 to the fund.

Ted Leonard in Boston sent in $290. “At work they gave us a lump sum in lieu of a larger raise,” he said.

“A number of my coworkers commented that this gift card was no ‘gift’—we pay for it every day,” wrote Alyson Kennedy, about a Walmart card workers at Stampede Meatpacking received after the company laid off 40 temporary workers, and increased the workload for others. Kennedy sent in $25 to the fund.

Workers who want to contribute blood-money bonuses can write or call *Militant* distributors listed on page 8.

Longshoremen honor coworker killed on job

Militant/Bernie Senter

MIAMI—The International Longshoremen’s Association Local 1416 organized a memorial meeting April 28 for Kevin Whyms, a coworker killed on the job March 30 after a container fell on him. More than 100 workers, family members, and other unionists gathered at the Seamen’s Center hall at the Port of Miami. Over the last 20 years, an average of 12 workers have been killed annually in the United States while working with marine cargo. Whyms was the third ILA member killed on the job since February 25.

—DEBORAH LIATOS

Maori fight New Zealand government frame-up

BY PATRICK BROWN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Maori rights activists and others facing frame-up “terrorist” charges are winning support as their May 30 trial approaches. Denied the right to a jury trial, the 15 defendants face a prosecution case built on material gained through unlawful surveillance. The use of such “evidence” would set a dangerous precedent for workers’ rights.

“These people will never, ever get a fair and just trial,” Tamati Kruger, spokesperson for the Tuhoe *iwi*, or tribe, said. More than 150 well-known Maori, academics, and others have endorsed a letter from prominent lawyers Jane Kelsey and Moana Jackson calling for dropping all the charges.

More than 300 police carried out “anti-terrorism” raids on 60 homes in cities and towns across the country on Oct. 15, 2007. The town of Ruatoki in the Tuhoe territory of the Urewera mountain range was a particular target. The groundwork for this “Operation 8” was laid by a year of surveillance under the 2002 Terrorism Suppression Act (TSA).

Prominent Tuhoe activist Tame Iti is one of the defendants who come up for trial May 30. All 15 face charges under the Arms Act. Iti and four others also face indictments for “participating in an organized criminal group.”

The police and government pursued the case under these allegations after their initial attempt to prosecute under terrorism charges was rebuffed by the Solicitor General. They claim that the defendants participated in weapons training camps in the Ureweras.

Writing in the April 2 issue of the *New Zealand Herald*, business writer and senior columnist Fran O’Sullivan said that while she “hold[s] no brief for . . . Tame Iti,” the refusal of a jury trial runs counter to the country’s “human rights record.” She also criticized the “prosecution’s apparent drive to retrofit the case so that the police can use what was initially deemed illegally gained evidence”—a reference to material obtained under TSA warrants.

A new movie exposing the frame-up has been screened at film festivals in Wellington, Auckland, and Dunedin. *Operation 8: Deep in the Forest* features eyewitness accounts of the 2007 police operation by residents of Ruatoki.

THE MILITANT

Syrian working people fight to oust dictator

Demonstrations throughout Syria continue despite a bloody crackdown by the regime of Bashar al-Assad. Follow this and other struggles by working people in the Middle East and North Africa for their rights and space to organize. Read the ‘Militant.’

March in Homs, Syria, April 22. Government killed more than 100 protesters nationwide that day.

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Workers look to 'Militant'

Continued from front page

new readers and renewals. We invite our readers to join us in this effort. In the first 10 days of the campaign, 535 have subscribed.

Branches of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States and of Communist Leagues in four countries have adopted subscription quotas for the drive. Following discussion of workers' growing political responsiveness to the *Militant* about half of SWP branches increased their initial goals.

These increases brought the combined local quotas a bit over the international goal of 2,000 subscriptions. Discussions of the political openings in the remaining branches would put the communist movement on course to surpass the international goal.

Many who sign up as regular *Militant* readers are also picking up copies of one or more of the books being offered at a special price with a subscription. (See ad on this page.)

In the Midwest, where socialist workers have campaigned extensively with the *Militant* at union rallies defending public workers, door-to-door sales make it possible to get a picture of what a broader layer of working people are going through and thinking.

"In Winneconne, Wisconsin, we were invited to visit with a retired construction worker and his wife, a teacher, who had gotten a subscription at a rally in Madison," explains Tony Lane from the Twin Cities. "He renewed his subscription and also got *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics.* He wanted us to know how much he values the *Militant* and to discuss what working people can do now to find further ways to fight."

At the May Day rally in Madison, Joel Greeno, a Wisconsin dairy farmer and subscriber, spoke with Laura Anderson, a factory worker and distributor of the paper from Chicago. Greeno told Anderson he appreciated the *Militant* article last week explaining why it was a sign of weakness for some union supporters to have tried to shout down Republican Party politician Sarah Palin at an April rally at the Wisconsin Statehouse. Many farmers he talks to are Republicans, Greeno said, but they are beginning to question everything as a result of the capitalist crisis. He stressed how important it is to have space open for discussion and debate.

Two high school students joined a May Day weekend door-to-door team in Lincoln, Nebraska. Talking about this new experience, Max Bontrager said, "One woman told us she doesn't watch the news because it only offers problems, but what people saw in the *Militant* was solutions and ways to communicate." The team sold two subscriptions.

Teams of socialist workers from different cities are hooking up, like the one from New York and Philadelphia that sold 15 subscriptions in Hightstown, New Jersey, on May Day. As in other areas, the team not only joined the rally but spent a few hours taking the paper door to door in a nearby working-class neighborhood. Like elsewhere, among the workers interested in having political discussion and who bought subscriptions were those calling themselves Republicans, Democrats, Libertarians, independents, conservatives, liberals, and more.

Cecelia Moriarity in Seattle told the *Militant* she now makes sure to always have a copy of the paper with her. "I was at the grocery store and someone started up a conversation with me about the weather. Before long we were talking about politics, and I said, 'I've got a paper you'd like.' He pulled out $5 and got a subscription."

Militant/Arlene Rubinstein

Almost 400 *Militant* subscriptions were sold at demonstrations and door to door across United States last week. Norton Sandler, left, sells paper at book fair in Los Angeles, May 1.

We encourage *Militant* readers to be part of this effort to get the paper out as broadly as possible. Order a bundle to sell from our New York address on page 2. Sign up your coworkers, neighbors, and friends. Join one of the teams organized in cities and towns across the country by contacting distributors listed on page 8.

Help us burst through the top of the goal to sign up well over 2,000 readers to a newsweekly "published in the interests of working people."

In Solidarity,
Paul Mailhot
Circulation Director

Spring 'Militant' subscription campaign

April 23–June 6 (week 1)

Country	quota	sold	%
UNITED STATES			
Los Angeles	**125**	**66**	**53%**
Philadelphia	**85**	**40**	**47%**
San Francisco	**150**	**54**	**36%**
Atlanta	**150**	**49**	**33%**
Des Moines	**160**	**42**	**26%**
Twin Cities	**130**	**34**	**26%**
Chicago	**150**	**34**	**23%**
Miami	**75**	**17**	**23%**
Seattle	**160**	**36**	**23%**
New York	**330**	**72**	**22%**
Houston	**65**	**14**	**22%**
Boston	**60**	**10**	**17%**
Washington, D.C.	110	6	5%
Total U.S.	**1,750**	**474**	**27%**
Canada	65	9	14%
New Zealand	**55**	**11**	**20%**
Australia	**60**	**14**	**23%**
UNITED KINGDOM		0	
Manchester	25	0	0%
London	**80**	**27**	**34%**
Total UK	**105**	**27**	**26%**
Total	**2,035**	**535**	**27%**
Should be	**2,000**	**340**	**17%**

'Militant' Fighting Fund

April 2–May 30 (week 3)

Country	Quota	Paid	%
UNITED STATES			
San Francisco	**$14,000**	**$7,410**	**53%**
Atlanta	**$7,800**	**$3,122**	**40%**
Boston	$4,000	$1,475	37%
New York	$21,000	$6,827	33%
Chicago	$10,000	$2,405	24%
Washington, D.C.	$8,500	$1,938	23%
Houston	$3,000	$666	22%
Twin Cities	$7,000	$1,540	22%
Des Moines	$3,400	$610	18%
Seattle	$8,600	$1,075	13%
Philadelphia	$4,000	$425	11%
Miami	$3,000	$155	5%
Los Angeles	$8,500	$400	5%
Other		$300	
Total U.S.	$102,800	$28,347	28%
Canada	**$6,400**	**$3,000**	**47%**
New Zealand	**$3,500**	**$1,787**	**51%**
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	**$1,600**	**$827**	**52%**
Manchester		$0	0%
UK Total	**$1,600**	**$827**	**52%**
Australia	**$1,500**	**$641**	**43%**
France	**$300**	**$255**	**85%**
Total	**$116,100**	**$34,857**	**30%**
Should be	**$116,000**	**$43,500**	**38%**

Militant Fighting Fund wins contributions from subscribers

BY DOUG NELSON

"Friends, I wish it were more, but I've been laid off for a year and a half. Things are getting tight. How 'bout this though: "Brothers and Sisters: Read the *Militant.* (My best advice is as simple as that.) It's your duty to learn, and you're not going to find this information anywhere else."—Tommy Thompson, Carpenters Local #225.

The note above was included with a contribution to the Militant Fighting Fund. The *Militant* depends on contributions, big and small, from readers who see its value as a tool in the struggles of working people. This year's annual fund drive aims to raise $116,000 by May 30.

An important aspect of the effort is reaching out to supporters of the paper who haven't contributed before.

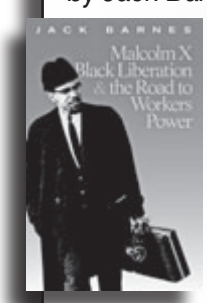
"Enclosed you will find my cheque for $50. I support your socio-economic mission," wrote long-term reader Georges Germain from Canada. "Once read at home, I mail the paper to my brother-in-law in Saulte Ste-Marie, Ontario. A former union member at Algoma Steel for 42 years, he reads them and passes them on to an active union steward at the plant. . . . I wish you success in the fund-raising campaign."

"The presentation opened up new ideas for me on how to change society and I want to get more involved," said Sara Thiessen at an April 30 Militant Fighting Fund event in Seattle. She recently got her first copy of the *Militant* at a Students of Color conference in Yakima, Washington. The featured speaker at the meeting was Paul Mailhot, the paper's circulation director. Participants contributed $1,245 and raised $275 in new pledges.

A total of $34,857 has been sent from *Militant* supporters worldwide, with five weeks left to go.

Special offers with Militant subscription

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power
by Jack Barnes ~~$20~~ **$10 with subscription**



This book helps us understand why it is the revolutionary conquest of power by the working class that will make possible the final battle for Black freedom—and open the way to a world based not on exploitation, violence, and racism, but human solidarity. A socialist world.

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by Jack Barnes ~~$3~~ **$2 with subscription**

Contact distributors on page 8—subscription rates on page 2

Pathfinder Press

Iraq: thousands of troops to remain after 'pullout'

BY SETH GALINSKY

Washington is pushing the Iraqi government to officially request that U.S. troops remain beyond the end of 2011, the withdrawal deadline proclaimed by President Barack Obama.

Even without a formal request, the U.S. State Department is planning to double U.S. embassy personnel in Iraq and open a consulate in the Kurdish areas in the north. *Wall Street Journal* columnist Max Boot reported in mid-April that the plans include deploying "1,000 diplomats backed by 16,000 contractors." The latter are often former members of U.S. Special Operations forces.

Some 50,000 U.S. troops are operating in Iraq, down from a peak of some 170,000 at the height of the U.S. war and occupation. According to the *Journal*, the U.S. forces are "conducting counterterrorism missions" and "assisting and advising Iraqi" troops, another way of saying they are still involved in combat.

While the Pentagon rebuilt the Iraqi army following the 2003 U.S. invasion, it has little confidence in its fighting capacity without U.S. supervision. The Iraqi military has no fighter planes, no artillery, and only 70 tanks.

The U.S. ruling class is worried that the relatively stable government it has cobbled together in Iraq could unravel if U.S. troops withdraw. Washington also wants to counter Iranian influence, among both Shiites and Sunnis in Iraq.

U.S. secretary of defense Robert Gates toured Iraq in early April. "If folks here are going to want us to have a presence," he told the press, "we're going to need to get on with it pretty quickly."

Petty Officer 2nd Class Emmanuel Rios

U.S. Special Operations soldier with Iraqi elite force in Baqubah, Iraq, in February.

U.S. 'defense' team reflects CIA-military ties

Continued from front page

substantially reducing the military's reliance on CIA "intelligence."

The Pentagon has also been expanding clandestine warfare. In September 2009 General Petraeus, then head of the U.S. Central Command, signed a secret order authorizing U.S. Special Operations troops to conduct reconnaissance missions throughout the Middle East and Central Asia to "penetrate, disrupt, defeat and destroy" militant groups and "prepare the environment" for future military attacks.

In approving that order, wrote the *Atlantic*, "Obama authorized one of the largest expansions of clandestine warfare since September 11, 2001."

Kicked upstairs?

Some voices among the U.S. capitalist rulers, however, suspect that Petraeus is being "kicked upstairs" by Obama, who was at odds with the general over the Iraq war prior to the 2008 elections and has clashed with him over troop levels in Afghanistan since the new administration took office.

"General Petraeus may be miscast at [CIA headquarters in] Langley," the *Wall Street Journal* wrote in an editorial April 29. "The leader of the Iraq and Afghan surges has earned a promotion to be Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the nation's top military job that comes open in September. But the White House appears to prefer a lower-profile four-star with less of an independent streak, General James Cartwright, the current vice chairman. The CIA post looks like a consolation prize—and perhaps a political shunting aside."

Cartwright, known in the White House as Obama's "most favorite general," is considered a likely replacement for Adm. Michael Mullen, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, when Mullen retires later this year.

Petraeus has also been talked about by some as a possible 2012 Republican presidential or vice-presidential challenger to an Obama second term. By placing him at the CIA, "he could be hidden," notes *Investor's Business Daily*.

Petraeus rose to prominence as a combat officer during U.S. imperialism's bloody war against Iraq. He was the chief U.S. commander there during the "surge" in 2007, through which the deployment of 30,000 additional U.S. troops turned the tide in Washington's favor and established a degree of political stability for the U.S. rulers.

When Obama took office in January 2009, the U.S. government faced deteriorating military conditions in Afghanistan. In contrast to all his Democratic and Republican predecessors in the White House, however, Obama—and the social layer of well-paid university professors, foundation staffers, and middle-class professionals (many of them former "campus activists") from which he emerged—had little experience or interest in military affairs or passion for fighting and winning wars to protect the U.S. capitalist rulers' far-flung economic and strategic interests worldwide.

What's more, members of this privileged layer—who live in comfortable urban and suburban neighborhoods and university towns across the United States—rarely have children facing death or maiming in U.S. imperialism's volunteer armed forces, or even know anyone with sons and daughters in uniform. Today, only 0.5 percent of the U.S. population is on active military duty—with the heaviest concentration from working-class and farm families across the South and Great Plains, or urban neighborhoods with the highest joblessness and lowest incomes. This is a substantial drop from the years of the Vietnam War, when some 1.5 percent of the population was in the military.

Given this situation, writes Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, in his recent book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, "More than any other administration in the history of U.S. imperialism, [the Obama administration's] foreign, military, and 'domestic security' policies are stamped by near total deference to the top echelons of the professional officer corps of the U.S. armed forces."

But the challenges posed for the Democratic administration by unrelenting economic, social, and political disorder throughout the capitalist world have pushed Obama since taking office to look for those in the top brass with a cast of mind closer to his own.

Conflicts in the administration and the Pentagon over Washington's wars in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and now Libya take place in that context.

As the U.S. rulers' need to stem mounting setbacks in Afghanistan lurched toward crisis in late 2009, Petraeus—then heading the U.S. Central Command, responsible for U.S. military operations in the Mideast and Central Asia—pressed for a course similar to the Iraq surge. But his proposals met resistance in the administration, especially from the new president himself, as well as Vice President Joseph Biden.

Obama's Wars by Bob Woodward, an associate editor of the *Washington Post*, provides a useful account.

Debate on Afghanistan

A key disputed question was how many additional troops Obama should send to Afghanistan. Gen. Stanley McChrystal, then commander of U.S. forces there, along with Petraeus, McMullen, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, favored sending 40,000.

Obama, however, insisted on a smaller buildup, and on a timeline for withdrawal to ensure there would not be large numbers of U.S. troops there "after my presidency." As an alternative to Petraeus's course, Biden proposed a smaller number of special operations forces to take more aggressive action against the Taliban, both in Afghanistan and inside the border with Pakistan.

Cartwright, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs, backed Biden and drew up a military plan along these lines. That proposal, dubbed "the hybrid option," was to send two special forces brigades, totaling 10,000 troops and another 10,000 "trainers" of Afghan forces. "Rather than sitting there protecting people these troops would engage and kill the enemy," Woodward quotes Cartwright as saying. "We can sort of use [the Taliban's] tactics against them."

Fearing he could be blamed for "losing" Afghanistan during his race for a second term, Obama—after a two-month-long review—settled on a compromise figure of 30,000, which brought U.S. forces there up to some 100,000, where they remain today.

"I don't think you win this war," Woodward quotes Petraeus as saying privately. "I think you keep fighting. . . . This is the kind of fight we're in for the rest of our lives and probably our kids' lives."

"Using the Taliban's tactics against them" and fighting wars "for the rest of our kid's lives." That's what the imperialist war makers and their career-climbing generals have to offer workers and farmers in the United States and our fellow working people from Afghanistan to Pakistan to Libya—and who knows where else in the years and decades ahead.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

U.S. 'Targeted Assassinations' in Pakistan and Libya: Not in Interests of Working People. Sat., May 14, 7:30 p.m. *5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.*

FLORIDA

Miami

Obama Says 'Ordinary Folks Aren't Paying Attention,' Communists Say Political Responsiveness in Working Class Grows. Workers React to the Cumulative Consequences of Three Years of Capitalist Crisis. Speaker: Steve Clark, editor of *Militant*. Sat., May 14. Dinner, 6 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. *719 NE 79th St. Tel.: (305) 757-8869.*

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning. Speaker: Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., May 13, 7:30 p.m. *3701 Pulaski Ave. Tel.: (215) 225-1270.*

NEW INTERNATIONAL
MAGAZINE OF MARXIST POLITICS & THEORY

Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq
by Jack Barnes
in *New International* no. 7
$14

Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun
by Jack Barnes
in *New International* no. 12
Today's accelerating global capitalist slump accompanies a continuation of the most far-reaching shift in Washington's military policy and organization since the U.S. buildup toward World War II. Class-struggle-minded working people must draw satisfaction from being "in their face" as we chart a revolutionary course to confront it. **$16**

See page 8 for a list of distributors or visit the Web page

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ON THE PICKET LINE

Quebec convenience store workers demand right to union

MONTREAL—Workers at the Couche-Tard convenience store chain in Quebec are fighting to be unionized. So far workers at four stores have won certification with the Confederation of National Unions. A total of 5,000 workers are employed by the chain.

John Phan, who has worked at the Couche-Tard at Jean-Talon and Iberville for three years, told the *Militant*, "We want better conditions: insurance, sick days, more respect in the way employees are talked to, better wages, more protection from work accidents." The company closed one store where workers had applied to be part of the union.

"We are doing this to get respect," Anne Cleary, who has worked at the Couche-Tard in the village of Saint-Liboire for four years, told *La Presse*. She makes Can$9.95 an hour, just 30 cents more than the minimum wage in Quebec (Can$1=US$1.05).

—Joe Young

Workers protest bosses' lawsuit against Bay Area dockworkers

SAN FRANCISCO—"Pacific Maritime Association: Drop the Charges Against Local 10!" was the demand of more than 100 unionists who rallied outside the Pacific Maritime Association's downtown offices here April 25. They were protesting a lawsuit by the employer association accusing International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 10 of conducting an illegal strike. As part of nationwide protests in solidarity with workers in Wisconsin, Longshoremen at the ports of Oakland and San Francisco didn't work April 4, the 43rd anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King.

"The longshoremen move the goods, we move the people," said Dorian Maxwell, a public transit bus driver and member of the Transit Workers Union. "Without us, the bosses can't make money. We need to stick together to stop them from busting up our unions."

—Eric Simpson

Coal miners in Poland strike for one day over privatization

Some 22,000 miners at six state-owned coal mines in Poland held a one-day strike April 18. The miners, members of the Solidarnosc trade union, are demanding a 10 percent pay hike and guarantees against layoffs for 10 years if the government goes ahead with plans to privatize JSW Coal Company, the largest coking coal company in Europe.

Mine union officials say the government should hold onto 51 percent of company shares. Company profits have increased sevenfold over the last year due to a jump in the price of coal.

—Seth Galinsky

Locked-out workers in Keokuk, Iowa, call for Friday the 13th 'Monster Picket'

Militant/Laura Anderson

Workers at Roquette America's corn-processing plant in Keokuk, Iowa, have been locked out by the company for more than six months. The workers are members of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union Local 48G. On May 13 from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. they are hosting an expanded picket line for all those who are "willing to stand with us against corporate greed." Meet at 301 Blondeau St. in Keokuk. For more information and to RSVP call 319-524-1249 or 319-795-5742. Email: bctgm48g@qwestoffice.net

Massachusetts Democrats push antiunion bill

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The Massachusetts House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a bill April 26 limiting the right of teachers and other municipal employees to collectively bargain over most health-care benefits. The vote was 111 to 42, with 81 Democrats voting in favor.

The bill, sponsored by Democratic House Speaker Robert DeLeo, empowers local officials to unilaterally set health insurance co-payments and deductibles. Public workers can discuss proposed changes for 30 days, but government authorities have the final say. The bill also requires retirees to enroll in Medicare. Unions can still bargain over insurance premiums.

Gov. Deval Patrick, who earlier this year proposed similar legislation, praised the House decision as an "important vote," though he hasn't yet said if he will sign it.

Shortly after taking office in 2009 the Democratic governor signed a bill that restricted the right of public workers for the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority to bargain over health benefits by moving them into the state health-insurance system.

"Everybody's pretty upset," said Robert Haynes, president of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, which backed the election campaigns of many of these Democrats. "It's hard for me to understand how my good friends in the Massachusetts House, that have told me they support collective bargaining, could do this."

Haynes, however, simply argued for a different method of imposing cuts. "We're willing to give the savings," he said. "All we wanted was an arbitrator, some kind of neutral process that would determine what's fair."

The drive against public workers in Massachusetts is one of a growing number of similar moves across the country. Democratic administrations from Andrew Cuomo in New York State and Edmund Brown in California to Republican-led governments in Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana, and other states are attacking union rights, cutting jobs, and reducing health and education services vital to working people.

An April 29 *Wall Street Journal* opinion piece titled "Union Busting, Massachusetts Style" by Kimberley Strassel equates the Massachusetts bill with the Republican-sponsored legislation passed in Wisconsin attacking public workers' collective bargaining rights. "The only difference is that Democrats have chosen to portray [Wisconsin governor Scott] Walker's legislation as 'union-busting' while presenting their own as necessary reform," she wrote.

The House bill now moves to the state Senate for a vote later this month.

Capitalism's World Disorder
WORKING-CLASS POLITICS AT THE MILLENNIUM
by Jack Barnes

The social devastation and financial panic, coarsening of politics, cop brutality, and imperialist aggression—all are products not of something gone wrong with capitalism but of its lawful workings. Yet the future can be changed by the united struggle of workers and farmers increasingly conscious of their capacity to wage revolutionary struggles for state power and to transform the world.

Communist Manifesto
by Karl Marx, Frederick Engels

Explains why communism is not a set of preconceived principles but the line of march of the working class toward power, "springing from an existing class struggle, a historical movement going on under our very eyes."

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25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

May 16, 1986

The biggest strike that has ever taken place in South Africa brought business to a near standstill May 1, as some 2 million Black workers stayed off the job. The one-day strike was called by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the nonracial federation that has 500,000 members.

The strike was in support of the demand that May Day be made an official national holiday. But it was also a massive show of determination to put an end to the apartheid system, which enables the white rulers to monopolize political and economic power by plundering the land of the Black majority, forcibly segregating them, and denying Blacks all political rights. The strike shows the growing strength of COSATU and its importance as a component of the anti-apartheid struggle.

THE Mmilitant
PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

May 15, 1961

The Kennedy administration is seriously considering sending United States troops to fight against guerrillas in South Vietnam and Thailand, according to Senator William J. Fulbright, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Fulbright said May 4 that he would support such moves "if they were considered necessary," even though he had opposed further commitment of U.S. forces in Laos.

The peoples of Thailand and South Vietnam are rebelling against the reactionary dictatorships fastened on them by the State Department and Pentagon. Premier Ngo Dinh Diem's government in South Vietnam controls only the cities. His troops enter the countryside only on punitive raids against the peasants who are seizing grain from usurers and landlords.

NEW MILITANT
Official Organ of the Workers Party of the U.S.

May 16, 1936

After three years of exile in Stalin's Siberia, Victor Serge, author of "The Year One of the Russian Revolution" and many other working class books, and a life-long and devoted militant in the revolutionary movement, has been released and returned to Belgium.

He was arrested in 1933 by an administrative order to the G.P.U. and exiled without the slightest semblance of a trial in violation of the Soviet laws for his continued refusal to give up his revolutionary views and prostitute himself to the task of liquidating the October Revolution.

He was deprived of all communication with the outside world and blacklisted so that he was unable to obtain employment in Orenburg, where he was exiled. Serge's papers, notes and manuscripts for books, were confiscated.

May Day rallies in U.S.

Continued from front page
the 2012 elections.

Valrey Johnson, 56, a cook and union representative at Park Place Health Center nursing home here, was among the participants. She has been on strike for the past year, along with 400 other members of Service Employees International Union Local 1199 at four nursing homes in the area.

"We had no choice but to fight," she explained. None of those who walked out have crossed the picket line.

❖

Milwaukee

A spirited march of more than 5,000 took to the streets here on May 1, International Workers Day. The marchers gathered in front of the offices of Voces de la Frontera (Voices of Border), the immigrant rights group that has organized May Day rallies for immigrant rights in Milwaukee since 2006.

This year's march was cosponsored by the Wisconsin State AFL-CIO. Richard Trumka, the federation's president, was the keynote speaker.

Workers chanted slogans in English and Spanish, including "We are one," the slogan of the AFL-CIO campaign against the austerity and union-busting measures of Wisconsin governor Scott Walker, and "What do we want? Papers! When do we want it? Now!"

—Maggie Trowe

Los Angeles

Some 3,000 marched here in an action organized by the Full Rights for Immigrants Coalition. "L.A. labor marches for immigrants, Wisconsin, and all workers. We are one, respect our rights," said a call for the protest by the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO.

A couple dozen union contingents took part, including one with several hundred from the Service Employees International Union.

Airport workers and car washers, both fighting to organize unions, marched with the United Steelworkers contingent. "Many car *washeros* are working only for tips," said car washer Andy Dominguez.

—Ellie García

San Jose, California

A coalition of unions and immigrant rights groups organized a march of more than 2,000 here May 1.

Sponsoring unions included United Food and Commercial Workers, Service Employees International Union, Communications Workers of America, and United Farm Workers.

Workers were there from the Justice for Mercado Workers Coalition. They are fighting for unionization and against firings at Mi Pueblo Super Market.

"The company fired 300 workers," said Antonio Martínez, who was dismissed after two and a half years. "They won't hire us back, but are keeping others with less seniority and pay. We want to help people still working there so they think about having a union."

—Carole Lesnick

Chicago

"If one is deportable, we are all exploitable," read a banner leading a march here of about 1,000 from Union Park to Plaza Tenochtitlán in the predominantly Latino neighborhood of Pilsen.

The main demand was for a moratorium on deportations. Several carried handmade signs pointing to the million people deported during President Barack Obama's tenure.

—John Hawkins

Militant/Scott Breen

More than 1,000 demonstrate on May Day in Yakima Valley, Washington.

Madison, Wisconsin

Some 500 union activists, students, and other supporters of immigrant rights rallied here May 1 in Brittingham Park and marched to the capitol chanting, "An injury to one is an injury to all!"

About 60 laundry workers from Chicago came in a bus wearing yellow Workers United union T-shirts. One of those, Martha Caicedo, said, "We came to march for benefits for all workers. We all have been facing worse situations."

Cops prevented farmers from joining the march with their tractors. "We need to build relationships between farmers and labor, this is not about Democrats or Republicans, it's about the haves and the have nots," said Joel Greeno, vice president of Family Farm Defenders.

—Laura Anderson

Working people respond to tornadoes in South

Continued from front page
ham. Trailer parks and other working-class communities suffered the greatest damage. More than 1 million people in Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee were left without power.

Many workplaces shut down. This included the Oak Grove mine, west of Bessemer, Alabama, and Jim Walters no. 4 mine in Brookwood. Honda, Mercedes-Benz, and Toyota auto plants were closed in the state due to lack of power.

But workers left jobless from the storm in eight Alabama counties are not eligible for disaster assistance unless state unemployment compensation benefits are exhausted.

Insurance companies in Alabama had to be ordered by the state government to give customers a 30-day grace period to pay premiums, delaying cancellation of coverage for non-payment until May 27. At the same time, the insurers are telling claimants that they have to wait while the companies "staff up."

Birmingham mayor William Bell imposed an 8:00 p.m.–6:00 a.m. curfew in the city, where working people have been organizing relief work. Within a couple days after the tornado, miners in Birmingham were collecting supplies, such as water, food, clothing, and candles, and delivering them to out-of-the-way places like Dora, where there is no public transportation. Steelworkers set up a relief station in Tarrant City, collecting water, diapers, and other supplies and distributed them in Forestdale, one of the hardest-hit areas.

In Pratt City, a disaster relief station was set up at Wylam Elementary School on Cherry Avenue. A retired coal miner, who asked that his name not be used, told the *Militant* that a representative from the Federal Emergency Management Agency started asking a lot of personal questions when he tried to apply for assistance. "This is supposed to be about aid, not politics," said the miner. He described how he and a group of other men and women went house to house rescuing trapped residents.

Student volunteers from Stillman College set up a relief station where people could make phone calls to relatives. Students who lived off campus lost everything. Darren Keith, a student from New Jersey, was among those off-campus students who were hospitalized. "After returning from the hospital we went back to school to find shelter, but the dorm overseer wouldn't let us in," said Keith. "We went to the student government, formed a committee to go to Dean of Housing, and he finally relented. Where were we supposed to go?"

Authorities from the local police to the National Guard have been checking identification of people entering affected areas and denying access to anyone who can't prove that they live there. At the shelter in Pratt City, Victoria Robinson explained that she grew up in that town but now lives in northern California. She was visiting her mother who has Alzheimer's disease when the storm hit. "I had to find a piece of mail that had the address on it before they would let me back in," she said.

"I thought about the help we got after Hurricane Katrina and knew I had to come," said a student from Xavier College in New Orleans who had just arrived in Pratt City to volunteer. Members of the Samford University football team and women's soccer team from Homewood, Alabama, were among those who came to help.

Brenda Madison, a retired McDonald's manager from Birmingham, organized a group of friends and family members to provide food in Pratt City. Madison explained that she had lost three family members to a tornado in 1977. "I decided to take $1,000 out of the bank and buy enough food to feed 1,000 people," she said. "Some people asked me, 'How do you know if they live in the area?' But that's not important to me."

"We have to rely on ourselves," said Sharon Barkley, a retired special education teacher. "We can't sit around and wait for others. Nothing will get done."

Youth sentenced in racist killing, cops who covered it up are next

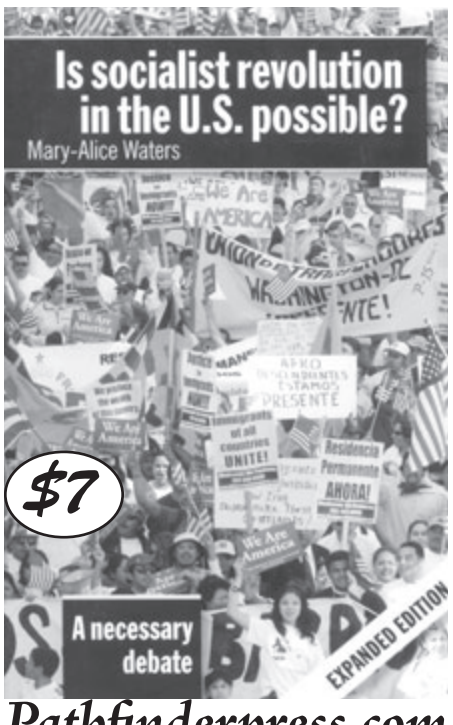
BY JANET POST

PHILADELPHIA—The three defendants in the 2008 killing of immigrant worker Luis Ramírez of Shenandoah, Pennsylvania, have now been sentenced. Derrick Donchak, 21, and Brandon Piekarsky, 19, received terms of nine years in federal prison February 23. Colin Walsh, 19, was sentenced April 6 to 55 months.

Ramírez, originally from Mexico, had worked in the region's factories and fields for six years. He was beaten to death by a gang of white youth who targeted him because he was Latino. An all-white jury in a state court acquitted Donchak and Piekarsky in May 2009 of most charges and instead convicted them of simple assault. Walsh confessed to taking part in the assault and testified against both Donchak and Piekarsky and against cops who helped cover up the crime. He was convicted of violating Ramírez's civil rights.

Ramírez's friends, family, and supporters pressed for justice, holding protests and commemorations. Federal prosecutors indicted Donchak and Piekarsky in December 2009. They also charged Police Chief Matthew Nestor, Lt. William Moyer, and Officer Jason Hayes with covering up what happened the night Ramírez died.

Nestor was found guilty of falsifying records and Moyer of lying to the FBI. Their sentencing is June 1. Hayes was acquitted. Donchak, Piekarsky, Nestor, and Moyer have filed appeals.



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Cuban TV series exposes U.S. attacks on revolution

BY JOHN HAWKINS

Cuba's Reasons, a documentary series recently broadcast on Cuban television, sheds light on Washington's ongoing efforts to organize counterrevolutionary activity on the island. The series describes how the U.S. government today is conducting its 50-year campaign to undermine the Cuban Revolution.

Through interviews with four Cuban revolutionaries who spent as many as 27 years working undercover within "dissident" circles, the first three episodes show the close ties between counterrevolutionary groups in Cuba and the U.S. government through its Interests Section in Havana. The groups are shown to be politically isolated in Cuba and utterly dependent on the imperialists' patronage.

Moisés Rodríguez and Carlos Serpa, the subjects of the series opener *The Empire's Pawns*, describe how, as agents of Cuban State Security, they became involved in U.S.-sponsored projects to establish so-called human rights organizations in Cuba as fronts for U.S.-directed counterrevolutionary activity. The documentary describes how money flowed to these groups from U.S. government agencies and Cuban American groups based in the United States with close ties to Washington.

Rodríguez became a notable counterrevolutionary during his assignment from 1980–2007 and was even flown to Miami where he met with leading U.S.-backed anti-Cuba mercenaries. Among them was Luis Posada Carriles, who in a July 1998 *New York Times* interview bragged about organizing a string of Cuban hotel bombings in 1997. He is also wanted in Cuba and Venezuela for masterminding the bombing of a Cuban airliner in 1976 that killed all 73 passengers.

Serpa describes his rise to prominence in the "dissident" milieu in Cuba. He became director of the Union of Free Journalists of Cuba and the principal leader of several other groups through his willingness to concoct fictional stories designed to tarnish Cuba's image. Street footage illustrates how widely he was despised by the people of Cuba. As the foremost representative of pro-U.S. journalists on the island, he was well-placed to document the activities and links to the U.S. government of small groups like Ladies in White, as well as the "independent journalists" and "independent librarians."

Rodríguez and Serpa both explain how all the "dissidents" they worked with were motivated above all by money and the possibility of emigrating to the United States.

Serpa demonstrates the absolute lack of any pretense of minimal journalistic standards on the part of Radio Martí, a U.S. government station that broadcasts in Cuba and South Florida. During the documentary, he places a call to the station and fabricates a story of his arrest and mistreatment at the hands of Cuban authorities. Within minutes his tale is being broadcast as news.

Truths and Principles documents the lengths to which U.S. diplomatic personnel and Washington's secret agents go to smuggle sophisticated communications equipment into Cuba to advance their counterrevolutionary activity. Dalexis González Madruga, a graduate student in telecommunications engineering at the José Antonio Echeverría University, relates how he was contacted by U.S. agents to install a covert network capable of transmitting directly to the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. Viewers witness the actual delivery of the equipment disguised as surfing gear by a supposed U.S. tourist.

The documentary was released in March, around the same time that Alan Gross, a contractor for the U.S. State Department, was sentenced by a Cuban court to 15 years in prison. Gross was convicted of smuggling high-tech satellite equipment into the country, for which he was paid $500,000.

In the episode *Well-Paid Lies* Frank Carlos Vázquez, a Cuban painter, exposes the cynical use of artistic and cultural exchanges by Washington to fish for individuals it can buy off to promote counterrevolutionary propaganda on the island. One of the aspects of recent White House policy has been to expand such exchanges under the pretext of promoting "democracy," while a nearly 50-year economic and financial embargo designed to maximize economic hardship on the island continues unabated.

Dalexis González Madruga, graduate student at José Antonio Echeverría University, displays satellite dishes disguised as surfing gear that U.S. agents asked him to install as part of covert network capable of transmitting directly to U.S. Interests Section in Havana.

Vázquez details efforts by U.S. diplomatic personnel to lure Cuban artists and intellectuals with material incentives to project a negative image of the revolution in their works. He recounts an Interests Section–organized trip to Chicago he was part of for this very purpose.

U.S. Cyber Command targets Cuba

Cyberwar opens with a discussion of the establishment of the U.S. Cyber Command in May 2010 to focus resources on boosting Washington's ability to conduct cyber attacks, such as knocking out crucial industrial or transportation networks.

The episode, however, focuses on the imperialists' growing use of the Internet to further their propaganda campaign of lies and slander against the revolution.

Cuba is forced to use very expensive and slow satellite connections due to the U.S. economic embargo on the island, which blocks Cuba from using existing infrastructure available to other nations. At the same time, the U.S. Treasury Department announced in March that it would begin to allow the export of Internet-based communications and social networking services to Cuba, with the goal of undermining the government.

The documentary describes the use of these services, such as Facebook and Twitter, as well as the promotion of "independent bloggers" to defame Cuba. The episode demonstrates how a small handful of these bloggers are given artificial prominence and rewarded handsomely by big-business media and other organizations through cash prizes for "human rights" journalism. In one scene, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton pays tribute to well-known counterrevolutionary blogger Yoani Sánchez.

"All the actions of the independent bloggers have a unique pattern," explains a Cuban government press release, "the U.S. Interests Section in Havana."

Cyberwar ends by showing how thousands of tech-savvy Cubans, many of them young people, are entering this battlefield of ideas to defend the socialist revolution in Cuba.

The four documentaries—*The Empire's Pawns, Truths and Principles, Well-Paid Lies,* and *Cyberwar*—can be watched on YouTube.com with English subtitles.

Cuban minister: Haiti needs impartial aid

BY NAOMI CRAINE

"The rebuilding of Haiti . . . is a task which is still pending," declared Cuban foreign minister Bruno Rodríguez at a special session of the UN Security Council on Haiti April 6. In January 2010 a massive earthquake devastated that country, leveling the capital Port-au-Prince and killing hundreds of thousands.

"In the months following the terrible quake, Haiti seemed to be ripped apart by the governments of the most powerful and industrialized countries that were distributing their aid, in an arbitrary and arrogant fashion, via their voracious companies and some of their wealthiest NGOs [nongovernmental organizations]," he noted.

"What Haiti needs is substantial and impartial aid . . . that contributes to its development," said Rodríguez.

Rodríguez pointed as a practical example to Cuba's contribution to public health, from saving lives during the first days after the quake to treating the cholera epidemic that has swept the country, killing more than 5,000 people to date. Cuban doctors at 67 treatment units have cared for "more than 73,000 patients, a third of all cases in the country. Of these only 272 have died," he stated, a fraction of the overall 2 percent death rate for cholera patients in Haiti.

The vast majority of the $5.3 billion pledged at the UN Donors Conference in March 2010 has yet to arrive.

Much of the aid that does trickle in is channeled through the Interim Haiti Reconstruction Commission (IHRC), cochaired by former U.S. president William Clinton and Haitian prime minister Jean-Max Bellerive. On the anniversary of the UN Donors Conference, some 40 groups in Haiti, including peasant and community groups, called for the elimination of the IHRC "whose existence is an affront to our collective dignity" and undermines Haiti's sovereignty.

Of the 10,000 international agencies and charities operating in Haiti today, less than 2 percent regularly report to the government's planning ministry.

Some 80 percent of the rubble has still not been cleared more than a year after the quake. According to UN figures, 680,000 Haitians are headed into a second hurricane season still living in makeshift camps.

"I'm hearing a lot of talk about reconstruction, but have yet to see any action," Tony Jeanthenor, vice-chair of the Haitian community group Veye Yo in Miami, told the *Militant.* Virtually no houses have been built. Most of those who have left the camps have either moved in with relatives in other regions, or returned to damaged homes.

Since a U.S.-backed coup in 2004, "the masses have been pushed out of the political process by the international community," particularly the governments of the United States, France, and Canada, Jeanthenor said. "These same international forces are in control of the money and the NGOs."

The Cuban medical teams "seem to have a real interest in helping us. I hope they stay," Emmanuel Losier, a patient in one of the treatment centers, told the *Miami Herald* in February. A March 1 article in that paper noted that Cuban doctors are the main medical providers in rural areas.

For Further Reading

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

By Jack Barnes

The Cuban Revolution of 1959 had a worldwide political impact, including on workers and youth in the imperialist heartland. As the proletarian-based struggle for Black rights was advancing in the U.S., the social transformation fought for and won by Cuban toilers set an example that socialist revolution is not only necessary—it can be made and defended. $10

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The ranks, not competing labor officials, are the union

Below is an excerpt from A Political Biography of Walter Reuther: The Record of an Opportunist, *one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for May. The excerpt is from the chapter "Meany vs. Reuther" by Farrell Dobbs, which first appeared in the Jan. 16, 1967, issue of the* Militant. *Dobbs was a longtime central leader of the Socialist Workers Party and of labor battles in the Midwest in the 1930s that organized over-the-road truckers into the Teamsters union and helped pave the way for the industrial union movement.*

When the AFL and CIO merged into one labor federation in 1955, George Meany became president and Walter Reuther, the president of the United Auto Workers, became vice president of the new federation. Dobbs quotes Reuther in the mid-1960s as saying that the union movement "represents a smaller proportion of the American labor movement than at the time of the merger" in 1955—down from a third to a little more than a quarter of the labor force over that period. Today that figure has fallen to 11.9 percent (6.9 percent for the private sector)—and is still dropping. Dobbs helps explain why the course of the class-collaborationist labor officialdom is responsible for that decline and, most important, points toward what workers can do to rebuild union power.

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Steelworkers demonstrate against antistrike injunction in mid-1940s. Labor militancy led to growth of unions. Class-collaborationist course of union officialdom led to decline from one-third of labor force in mid-1950s to less than 7 percent for private sector workers today.

BY FARRELL DOBBS

[Let's] get to the nub of the dispute between Walter Reuther and George Meany in the top bureaucracy of the AFL-CIO. When the two labor federations merged in 1955, Meany headed the AFL and Reuther, the CIO. Meany got the top spot in the merger, while Reuther had to play second fiddle. So—Reuther wants Meany's job.

Only Reuther and Meany themselves can be fully aware of their personal aspirations in the current dispute and, for others, such aims are of no importance. It is the larger aspects of developments within the AFL-CIO that count. Clues to really important matters in the dispute can be found by probing into various key questions, for example: the present situation and needs of the AFL-CIO membership; Meany's policy and what Reuther has to offer in its place. Before examining these questions in particular, a few generalizations seem in order.

The overall picture indicates that a palace revolt is developing within the AFL-CIO bureaucracy. . . . Meany's policies have gotten dangerously out of gear with the needs of the union membership. Among other bureaucrats, such as Reuther, a feeling is growing that something must be done about it or the whole bureaucracy will face a rank-and-file uprising. When examined from this viewpoint, Reuther's present line—although failing to meet the workers' needs—reflects at least a distorted image of significant new labor trends.

Working people are showing increased concern and resentment over losses in buying power because of [Vietnam] War–inflated prices. They are worried about the growing gap between earnings and take-home pay due to tax gouging, imposed mainly to finance an unpopular war. As a result they tend to brush aside [President] Johnson's "guideposts" and press demands for "catchup" pay increases. There is also growing pressure for an escalator clause in union contracts to keep wages abreast of rising living costs.

Other key issues impelling workers toward struggle are speedup and bad working conditions, and in some industries they are rapidly being automated out of jobs. Grievances arising over these general issues continue to mount, clogging the present defective apparatus for handling them. Under the impact of these frustrations workers have shown growing militancy across the last year, and the trend is spreading throughout the class.

At the same time the capitalist government, to meet its war needs, is preparing to strike new blows at the workers instead of making concessions to them. Johnson's use of Taft-Hartley injunctions against strikers is on the rise, and the Vietnam War is used as a pretext. Stiffer federal laws against labor are in preparation: both new curbs on the right to strike and further government intervention into union affairs along the lines of the Kennedy-Landrum-Griffin Law.

Relying on Washington to back them up, employers are stiffening their resistance to union demands. . . . Monopoly corporations are spending millions for antiunion propaganda, and use of strikebreakers is on the increase. Even union bureaucrats have to bestir themselves in the face of such threats, and in Reuther's case he must keep in mind this year's contract negotiations in auto. Another prod is the mounting tendency among workers to engage in what might be called guerrilla warfare against the capitalists, the government—and the union bureaucrats.

In a number of cases lately the rank and file rejected contract settlements recommended by union bureaucrats, telling them to go back and get more from the company. Opposition is growing to the policy of tying the workers' hands with long-term contracts. Also new is the degree to which bureaucrats have had to tolerate, and sometimes authorize, local strikes. Demands are being pressed for a membership vote in determining contract settlements and in deciding if grievances have been adequately handled. All told, the bureaucrats are experiencing a decline in leadership authority, and some among them feel a need to do something about it. They think a little self-reform can do the trick, but the situation is too far gone for that.

Under bureaucratic rule the unions have become wedded to the status quo on the basis of rotten compromises with the capitalist class. Internally the unions have been damaged by witchhunting carried out in the service of the capitalist government. Attempts to organize new layers of workers, few though they have been, have resulted in far more failures than successes. As Reuther admits, "Today, the AFL-CIO represents a smaller proportion of the American labor force than at the time of the merger in December 1955."

There has been drastic loss of workers' control on the job, which was once powerfully maintained by the militant unions of the 1930s. Organized labor now wields far less economic power than it did in the 1945–46 strike wave. On the great social issues of the day, the union movement appears more or less as a lackey of capitalism, instead of meeting its historic role as a crusader for social betterment.

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May BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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EDITORIAL

White House 'justice' and erosion of workers rights

Continued from front page

press secretary Jay Carney read, word for word, a Department of Defense statement retracting some of the lies. Bin Laden "was not armed," the statement said, and did not hide behind his wife (who was not in fact killed) or any other woman.

It was in reference to this brazen White House hit that the commander in chief of the U.S. armed forces and former University of Chicago law professor intoned during a late-night, televised speech: *"Justice has been done."*

The operation had been planned for more than eight months after the al-Qaeda leader's whereabouts were discovered. Obama said that shortly after taking office in 2009, "I directed Leon Panetta, the director of the CIA, to make the killing or capture of bin Laden the top priority of our war against al Qaeda." There was clearly no intention of "capture."

The *Wall Street Journal* hailed the "triumph of intelligence, interrogation and special operations that are by necessity three of the main weapons in what the U.S. military has called this 'long war.'" The *Journal* went on to note, "The most striking fact of Mr. Obama's prosecution of the war on terror is how much it resembles Mr. Bush's, to the consternation of America's anti-antiterror left."

National Review columnist Victor Hanson gloated that, "A Nobel peace laureate is now the Left's totem and he can send quite deadly Americans on quite deadly missions as he sees fit—and without worry about a *New York Times* op-ed barrage or an ACLU lawsuit. That gives the U.S. newfound advantages, a veritable blank check, from keeping Guantánamo open indefinitely to using a Cheney 'assassination' team and valuable water-boarded intelligence wherever it wishes to."

Washington's course was also registered by Obama's April 28 nomination of Panetta as secretary of defense and of Gen. David Petraeus, currently the U.S. commander in Afghanistan, as head of the CIA. Among other things, the appointments reflect the degree to which operations by the U.S. military and CIA have become more and more integrated in U.S. wars in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and elsewhere (see accompanying article).

But as all modern history teaches, increased military and intelligence operations by imperialist governments abroad are an extension of the propertied rulers' efforts to bring to heel working people and our organizations in the class struggle at home.

The germ of the "national security" state Obama is today using and strengthening was planted during the administration of another Democratic president, Franklin Roosevelt, more than 70 years ago. In 1939 Roosevelt turned the FBI loose to investigate "subversive activities," by which he meant union-organizing drives and opposition in the labor movement to Washington's impending entry into World War II. In 1940 the FBI sent thousands of informers and agents provocateurs into factories, mines, and mills to spy on union, Black rights, and other political activities.

In 1941 the Smith "Gag" Act became law, outlawing "criminal seditious activities," which included speech. The first to be indicted were leaders of the Teamsters union in Minneapolis who were also members and leaders of the Socialist Workers Party. The class-struggle-minded Teamsters organized in the working class to oppose being dragged into the interimperialist slaughter. They pursued a course aimed at transforming the unions into a fighting social and political movement independent of the bosses' parties, the Democrats and Republicans.

In the 1950s, with a working-class-based movement developing to oppose Jim Crow segregation in the South, the FBI put its "Counterintelligence Program" into action to disrupt the work of Black organizations, the Communist Party, SWP, and others, through provocateurs, break-ins, wiretaps, and other unconstitutional activities.

The massive spying and harassment by the secret police—not just the "domestic" FBI, but also by the CIA and military intelligence agencies—were brought to light through the landmark lawsuit filed by the SWP against government spying. Among those the socialists filed suit against, in addition to the FBI and top White House officials, were the secretaries of defense and of the army and the directors of the CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency. (Those interested in finding out more about this case and political campaign can pick up *FBI on Trial: The Victory in the Socialist Workers Party Suit against Government Spying*, published by Pathfinder Press, as well as the article "Washington's Fifty-Year Domestic Contra Operation" in issue no. 6 of the Marxist magazine *New International*.)

Meeting in defense of imprisoned Minneapolis Smith Act defendants, mid-1940s. The germ of "national security" state President Barack Obama is strengthening today was planted during Franklin Roosevelt administration. Smith "Gag" Act of 1941 outlawed "seditious activities," which included speech. First to be indicted were leaders of Teamsters in Minneapolis, who were also members of Socialist Workers Party.

The ability of the U.S. imperialist rulers to carry out such operations against opponents of their policies at home was pushed back by the conquests of the powerful Black rights movement, massive anti–Vietnam War mobilizations, and related struggles of the 1960s and early 1970s. But the Democrats and Republicans have been trying to recuperate ever since, chipping away at the Bill of Rights where they've found the chance.

The Democratic administration of William Clinton made inroads in 1996 with its Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, and its Economic Espionage Act, which restored some of the instruments the rulers need to curb workers' political activity.

In 2001, when al-Qaeda bombed the World Trade Towers and the Pentagon—a reactionary, anti-working-class deed that handed the imperialists a pretext they grabbed—President George W. Bush and the bipartisan Congress quickly pushed through the USA Patriot Act, which built on Clinton's laws and gave much wider latitude to federal and other political police to conduct spying and disruption against individuals and organizations, carry out arbitrary searches and seizures, and jail immigrants indefinitely with no charges. A year later the U.S. Army's Northern Command was established, the first time since the Civil War that dealing with "civil disorder" within U.S. borders was authorized as a *military* matter for Washington's troops rather than a *police* matter for city, state, and federal police agencies.

Since then the Democrats and Republicans have steadily infringed on more rights, from monitoring email and Internet use, to expanding wiretapping, to widening use of informers against organizations, to curbing the rights defendants have in the courtroom.

At every step, these assaults have been rationalized as necessary to the fight against "terrorism."

The record of the Obama White House is stunning in this regard. Just in the little more than two years since his inauguration, the Democratic administration has stood at the helm during the stripping away of more Miranda and habeas corpus protections of the accused and convicted; FBI raids against antiwar activists; stepped-up militarization of airports; expansion of "fusion centers," where local cops collaborate with the FBI to go after "suspicious" persons; arbitrary and indefinite detentions; the deportations of thousands of immigrant workers—and now, the bin Laden assassination.

Since early this year, workers and farmers in the United States have begun to react against the increasingly devastating consequences of the world capitalist crisis, which has deepened sharply since 2007. Our unions are weaker than at any time since the beginning of the last ruinous economic and social crisis of the profit system at the opening of the 1930s. But the rulers know that militant and organized class battles are coming, and they are acting now to reduce our political space to organize and act to advance the interests of working people here and around the world.

That's why working people, above all, must expose and reject the duplicity and hypocrisy when the chief executive officer of the U.S. imperialist government tries to persuade the world that "Justice has been done."

LETTERS

Letter from Egypt

Thank you so much for sending me the article about the textile workers in Mahalla! [See May 2 *Militant*]. They're going to like it and appreciate it. I am happy American workers are also interested in this.

I need to tell you something, though. The distinction between the army and the police is very important here. The article says of Kamal Fayoumy that "In 2008, like many other leaders of the textile workers, he was imprisoned by the military in an attempt by the government to turn back the workers' protests."

It wasn't the military, it was a specific division of the police, belonging to the ministry of interior, usually referred to vaguely as government security forces or the Central Security Forces. They are a paramilitary division that the regime typically relied on for crackdowns and the like.

You have to keep in mind that the military was completely isolated at this point, at least physically. They did not come onto the scene except in the later stage of the January 25 uprising.

Alaa Murad
Cairo, Egypt

Great to know I'm still alive

I'm an inmate at a federal correctional facility. I was curious as to whether or not the *Militant* has donation subscriptions that I would be able to receive. I would happily share the papers with fellow inmates. We only get paid 17 cents an hour here. I have a little over 20 years left of my sentence to serve. It's a great feeling to know that I'm still alive on the other side of these fences.

A prisoner
Florida

In reply—We are starting your subscription with this issue. Complimentary and reduced-rate subscriptions are available to prisoners thanks to donations to the Militant Prisoners' Fund. We encourage workers behind bars to subscribe as part of staying alive politically in face of the dehumanizing abuse they receive from the capitalist justice system. We urge other readers to send subscriptions to friends or relatives behind bars. To contribute to the fund, see box below—*Editor*

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